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# THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

*pro bono humani generis*

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*Joshua Lederberg*  
UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR

August 3, 1992

Prof. A. Coda  
Director, Dept. of Genetics and Microbiology  
University of Pavia  
via Abbiategrasso 27100  
Pavia - Italy

Dear Professor Coda:

As you know, Dr. Vittorio Sgaramella has joined my lab on a research leave from the University of Calabria (and from Pavia) in Nov. 1991. This is a happy continuation of a fruitful and enjoyable collaboration started in the '60s in Pavia, carried on in the '70s at Stanford and hopefully to be continued in the next years.

During this last visit Dr. Sgaramella has become integrally involved in the research activity of my group, interacting in a highly creative way with the senior staff members as well as with the students. He has also initiated several new and interesting lines of research closely related to our ongoing projects and relevant to the problem of mutation origins and effects. They include:

- a spectral analysis of pre-mutational damages of DNA by physical (UV) and chemical (formaldehyde) agents, as well as a screening procedure of the resulting mutations, both exploiting a PCR-based approach
- a study on the effect of primary, secondary and tertiary structures of DNA on interruptions in DNA synthesis (gratuitous stops)
- an investigation on the blockage in DNA synthesis during primer extension on templates punctuated by bulky photo- or chemo-adducts or truncated by nucleases (mandatory stops)
- elaboration of a simplified version of the cycle sequence analysis of DNA
- an investigation of unusual tertiary structures in small replicons such as bacterial plasmids.

These projects have already yielded very stimulating results and should be further developed in the coming years. We look forward to continuing them here and in close collaboration with Dr. Sgaramella, who will return to Italy by September. To this purpose I am working to establish with him a formal collaboration through joint Italian-USA programs or other avenues.

From our point of view, it would be highly advantageous, and we would be most appreciative, if your department at Pavia could continue to provide Dr. Sgaramella with space and help to carry on these research projects, which otherwise I understand would be extremely difficult to be pursued as they deserve.

May I also express my support for the proposition that the University of Pavia, which has been egregiously honored by the research activity of Dr. Sgaramella in the past 25 years, might find a chair for him. I am happy to share with you a brief memoir that he has written about "My researches with Joshua Lederberg", which is also an accurate historical reflection of his own part in events which have proved momentous for the development of biotechnology and of molecular genetics.

Throughout his career, Dr. Sgaramella has been a devoted and brilliant scientist, and has added much lustre to the reputation of Italian biological science throughout the world.

Yours sincerely,

*Joshua Lederberg*  
Joshua Lederberg

enc: Dr. Sgaramella memoir

*Vittoria - I hope  
you will not be too  
critical of the texts.  
If it suits you, read &  
mail to Coda. Good luck.  
J.*

*- he drafted most of it*